Housing Resource Network

of Southwest Michigan

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to request thirty-percent of the annual tax credit authority be set-aside to develop housing for the homeless and/or special needs population.

The reason our Shelter remains full with a waiting list is due to the lack of safe, affordable housing in our community. Families come into our shelter and begin looking for a place the first day. The places that are available are often dilapidated and would not pass an inspection, thus it increase their length of stay and impedes others of coming into our shelter. We have had a waiting list to come into our shelter for over a year. We have purchased and are utilizing air mattresses on the floor in bedrooms and even the living room. Additional dollars to develop housing would definitely have a profound affect on the families living in poverty in out community.

I would also like to request that 10% of the units in all developments be targeted to incomes at or below 30% area median income (AMI) for those who are homeless and/or special needs. The group that toured New York saw several examples of "mixed housing" and how this defers the "NIMBYSM". Chicago also has examples of successful housing with Fair Market Rates (FMR) mixed with people with special needs and families that were homeless. Several of our Continuum members toured this facility with a Chicago CSH representative. This program has been extremely successful and remains at capacity.

Adults coming into our shelter frequently have jobs (39%) and an additional 20% are on disability but they still cannot afford rent in a suitable place. The housing vouchers we received this past year have had a huge impact in getting families housed. The problem right now is finding places that are safe and affordable because they are few and far between. Please consider homeless families and people with disabilities as you consider your allocations.

Sincerely

Alysia G. Babcock
Chair-HRN